Kham language

Kham language (Nepali: *खाम भाषा*)—narrowly defined—is a complex of Sino-Tibetan Magaric languages spoken natively in the highlands of the Rolpa and Rukum districts of Rapti and the westernmost part of Baglung district in Dhawalagiri Zone and Karnali region by western clans of the Kham tribes, called collectively western *Khams*. Randy LaPolla (2003) proposes that Kham magar and Dhut magar may be part of a larger "Rung" group. However, both may ultimately go for separate ethnic identity as they have distinct linguistic and cultural barriers.

Contents

Kham	
Kham language	
Native to	Nepal
Region	Rapti Zone, Rolpa and Rukum Districts Dhaulagiri Zone, Baglung DistrictKarnali regions
Ethnicity	Western Magar
Native speakers	27,000 (2011 census)[1]

Language family	Sino-Tibetan
	• Greater Magaric
	  • Magaric
	    • **Kham**

Writing system	Devanagari
Official status	
Official language in	No official status
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	Variously: `kif` – Eastern Parbate Kham `kgj` – Gamale kham `kip` – Sheshi Kham `kjl` – Western Parbate Pang
Glottolog	`kham1286` (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoi`

Geographical distribution

Ethnologue lists the following location information for the varieties of Kham.

Eastern Parbate Kham (dialects: Bhujel Kham, Nishel Kham) is spoken in the following villages of Baglung District, Dhawalagiri Zone.

- *Nishel dialect*: Nisi, Bhalkot, and Budhathok villages
- *Bhujel dialect*: Kuku, Diza, Kang, Masbang, Musuri, and Sukurdung villages

Western Parbate Kham (dialects: Takale, Maikoti, Mahatale, Lukumel, Wale, Thabangi)

- Rukum District, Rapti Zone
- Rolpa District, Rapti Zone
- Dolpa District, Karnali Zone

Taka-Shera considered to be the center of the Western Parbate Kham.

Gamale Kham (dialects: Tamali, Ghusbanggi)

- Rolpa District, Rapti Zone
- Baglung District, Dhawalagiri Zone

Gamale Kham is spoken in the western hills of Gam Khola, in Gam, Jhyalgung, Chalbang, Tamali, Dangadhara, Sheram, Ghusbang, Huiching, Guwakholagau, Maulabang, and Kuipadhara villages.

Sheshi Kham (dialects: Tapnanggi, Jangkoti)

- Western hills of Rolpa District, Rapti Zone: in Jangkot, Kotgaon (Tapnang), Rimsek, Korcabang, Dangdung, Hwama, Dhangsi, Bhabang, and Ghapa villages.

Dialects

Watters (2002:12) classifies the Kham dialects as follows.

Proto-Kham

- Sheshi
  - Tapnangi
  - Jangkoti
- Gamale
  - Tamali
  - Ghusbangi
- Parbate
  - Eastern Parbate
    - Nishel
    - Bhujel
  - Wester Parbate
    - Maikoti
    - Takale (including the Takale, Sheral, Ghumilbangi, Garkhanyel, Koral, and Nakhale village sub-dialects)
    - Lukumel
    - Thabangi
    - Wale

Phonology

Consonants

Kham Pang has 22 consonants.

		Bilabial	Alveolar		Velar		Glottal
			Plain	Palatal	Plain	Labial	
Nasal		m	n		ŋ		
Plosive	**voiceless**	p	t		k		
	voiced	b	d		g		
	aspirated	pʰ	tʰ		kʰ		
Affricate	**voiceless**		t͡s				
	voiced		d͡z				
	aspirated		t͡sʰ				
Fricative	**voiceless**		s				h
	voiced		z				
Rhotic			ɾ				
Approximant	**central**			j		w	
	lateral		l				

- The rhotic /ɾ/ is realized as a trill [r] at the end of words. Otherwise, it is a flap.

Vowels

Kham Pang has 25 vowels.

	Front					Central			Back					
	unrounded			rounded					unrounded			rounded		
	short	long	nasal	short	long	short	long	nasal	short	long	nasal	short	long	nasal
Close	i	iː	ĩː	y	yː				ɯ	ɯː	ɯ̃ː	u	uː	ũː
Mid	e	eː	ẽː	ø	øː	ə	əː	ə̃ː				o	oː	õː
Open						a	aː	ãː						

- length
- nasalization
- diphthongs
- vowel harmony

Tone

- voice register

Reconstruction

Proto-Kham has been reconstructed by Watters (2002). Proto-Kham reconstructions from Watters (2002: 443-456) are given below.

A. Body parts

- *r-dzəŋ ~ *b-dzəŋ 'back'
- *yep 'back (upper)'
- *phuː 'belly'
- *dziːh 'blood'
- *klaŋ 'body'
- *s-rus 'bone'
- *nun 'breast'
- *sək 'breath'
- *r-mehsiŋ 'buttocks'
- *r-tso 'cheek'
- *r-na 'ear'
- *(ba)r-zut 'egg'
- *mik 'eye'
- *s-ŋa 'face'
- *sot 'fat'
- *r-sin 'fingernail'
- *kəŋ 'foot'
- *r-nihl 'gums'
- *r-ta 'guts'
- *muhl 'hair (body)'
- *p-tsem 'hair (head)'
- *kut 'hand'
    - *r-la 'the under-arm area; side of the body'
- *s-r-ŋat 'head'
- *s-yiŋ 'heart'
- *b-rəhŋ 'horn'
- *sya 'animal'
- *r-khap 'jawbone'
- *kəl 'kidney'
- *p-sin 'liver'
- *yaːh 'mouth'
- *s-məŋ 'mustache'
- *r-dehŋ 'neck'
- *s-nat 'nose'
- *r-dzihs 'piss'
- *s-nis 'pus'
- *b-rəhm 'rib'
- *p-s-til 'saliva'
- *kli 'shit'
    - *r-kək 'excrement in the intestine of a slaughtered animal'
- *s-pum 'shoulder'

- *r-sa 'sinew'
- *l-kota 'skin'
- *r-nahp 'snot'
- *r-meh 'tail'
- *r-pihl 'tears'
- *r-b-yah 'thigh (upper side)'
- *p-s-le 'tongue'
- *ha-p-sya 'tooth'
- *wohs 'vomit'
- *hwaŋ 'waist'
- *r-mil ~ *s-mil 'wind pipe'
- *kər 'wing'

B. Pronouns/kinship terms/nouns referring to humans'

- *dahpa 'bachelor'
- *za 'child'
- *nan 'friend'
- *b-re 'husband'
- *dahme 'maiden'
- *r-min 'name'
- *r-mi; *ruː 'person'
    - *s-lepa 'man, male human'
    - *miːma 'woman, female human' < *mi 'person' + *ma 'female'
- *nana 'sister (older)'
- *nam 'sister (younger)'
- *nəŋ 'thou'
- *dzya 'wife'

C. Foodstuff

- *bəhres 'bread'
- *tsip 'curry'
- *r-zəm 'food'
- *s-ŋən 'herbs'
- *raŋrəi 'millet'
- *r-mo 'mushroom'
- *hek 'parched grain'
- *tuk 'poison'
- *(ya)kaŋ 'rice (cooked)'
- *plima 'wheat'

D. Animal names or animal products

- *səhr 'antelope'

- *nim 'bear'
- *r-pen 'bedbug'
- *b-zin 'bee'
- *bwa 'bird'
    - *s-puŋ 'chick'
- *gəl 'boar (wild)'
- *b-s-rut 'bug'
- *s-raŋ 'cat'
- *har 'cow'
- *kaːh 'dog'
- *ŋah 'fish'
- *tek 'frog'
- *ra 'goat'
- *r-ta 'horse'
- *r-pəti 'leech'
- *la 'leopard'
- *syar 'louse'
- *s-p-yu; *s-p-ya 'monkey'
- *srəm 'otter'
- *b-rəhŋ 'pheasant'
- *wə 'pig'
- *bi 'rat'
- *luk 'sheep'
- *guhl 'snake'
    - *daŋ 'python, constricting snake'
- *p-s-yap 'squirrel (flying)'
- *s-kyar 'woodpecker'
- *p-sən 'wool'

E. Natural objects or phenomena; the inanimate landscape; vegetable and mineral kingdoms

- *r-plah 'ashes'
- *kər 'branch'
- *r-pup 'cave'
- *la 'day'
    - *tshyam 'a certain day'
- *b-rih 'dirt'
- *r-gəm 'earth'
- *rihm 'evening'
- *ehŋ 'field'
    - *baŋ 'a field, meadow, bowl shaped valley'
- *meh 'fire'

- *p-set 'fruit'
- *tshi 'grass'
- *kuŋ 'hole'
- *dzəhŋ 'iron'
- *s-la 'leaf'
- *r-nahm 'low country'
- *p-s-ya + *hwot 'moon'
- *goŋ 'mountain'
- *rik; *mun 'night'
- *r-wa 'rain'
- *bəih 'river'
- *yem 'road'
- *s-rin 'root'
- *sa + *pik 'salt'
- *nup 'set (sun)'
- *saŋ 'shadow'
- *nəm 'sky'
- *mihkut 'smoke' < *meːh 'fire' + *ku 'smoke'
- *r-pom 'snow'
- *səro 'star'
- *r-dzuht 'stick'
- *luŋ 'stone'
- *nəmi(y) 'sun'
- *b-zu 'thorn'
- *siŋ 'tree'
- *riːh 'water'
  - *rihmun 'cooking water' < *riːh 'water' + *mun 'warm'
- *rəhm 'weed'

F. Artifacts and social organization

- *r-wan 'arrowhead'
- *r-wa 'axe'
- *r-beh(k) 'basket'
- *li 'bow'
- *tshəm 'bridge'
- *pəsi(-s) 'broom'
- *kwa 'cloth'
- *yahm 'door'
- *b-rihŋ 'drum'
- *'gor 'circle'
- *muhthap 'hearth' < *muh 'burn' + *thap 'hearth'

- *zihm 'house'
  - *r-bəŋ 'lower storey of house; cattle byre'
- *khor 'knife'
- *gur 'load'
- *tən 'sleeping mat'
- *b-lo 'large bamboo mat'
- *tshum 'mortar'
- *r-gəp 'a small needle'
- *r-khap 'a large needle'
- *b-zəhn 'net'
- *r-gum 'pillow'
- *gohr 'plow'
- *b-dza 'pot'
- *p-sip 'sheath'
- *tsihŋ 'snare'
- *gel 'spirit'
- *naŋkhar; *nam 'village'
- *ehn 'work'
- *kum 'yoke'

G. Spatial/directional

- *glahŋ 'across'
- *chin 'behind'
- *khar 'center'
- *me 'down'
- *s-ŋa 'front'
- *thək 'upright'
- *a-sniŋ 'year'
  - *rta-sniŋ 'last year'
  - *pərniŋ 'next year'

H. Numerals and quantifiers

- *tə 'one'
- *nehs 'two'
- *sohm 'three'
- *b-zi 'four'
- *r-ŋa 'five'

I. Verbs of utterance, body position or function

- *sən; *so 'awaken'
- *klik 'cry'
- *eh 'defecate'
- *si 'die'
- *b-yi 'fart'

- *sas 'laugh'
  - *p-s-rat 'to play'
  - *b-s-res 'toy, plaything'
- *nah 'rest'
- *tsuŋ 'sit'
- *r-ŋəhl; *em; *ruk ~ *ru-t 'sleep'
  - *s-ip 'to put to sleep'
- *p-tshis 'sneeze'
- *s-paŋ 'speak'
- *tsyahŋ 'stand'
- *kəlet 'tickle'
- *r-dzihs 'urinate'
- *woh-t 'vomit' < CAUS. of wohs 'to spurt out'
- *gəhr 'weep'

J. Verbs of motion

- *kles 'arrive'
- *rə-t 'bring'
- *plu-s 'climb'
- *huŋ 'come'
- *plu-s 'emerge'
  - *s-plu-t 'cause to emerge, expel'
- *te-s 'fall'
- *s-bur 'fly'
- *z-ba 'go'
- *b-la 'graze'
- *mohŋ 'hide'
- *zok 'run'

K. Verbs of emotion, cognition, perception

- *r-məŋ 'dream'
- *p-tshet 'fear'
- *s-meŋ 'forget'
- *that 'hear'
  - *thas 'to be heard, audible'
- *sən 'know'
- *r-ses 'something, to know how'
- *r-sək 'proud'
- *rəhŋ 'see'
  - *p-tsyu 'to look'
- *s-ŋər; *s-nəm 'smell'

- *b-ris 'tingle'

L. Stative verbs with human patients

- *məhŋ 'drunk'
- *sot 'fat'
- *kre 'hunger'
- *na 'ill'
- *so 'itchy'
- *tshaŋ 'pure'
- *tsos 'thirst'

M. Stative verbs with non-human patients

- *pək 'bad'
- *li 'be'
- *p-se 'bear fruit'
- *s-ta-s 'become'
- *ka 'bitter'
- *pak 'broken'
- *mom 'bud'
- *p-set 'bud'
- *r-pu-s 'burst'
- *zihm; *gim 'cold'
- *s-ta 'collapsed'
- *s-kluŋ 'detach'
- *thəŋ 'dried'
- *yək 'full'
- *p-tsa 'good'
- *s-len 'greasy'
- *piŋ 'green'
- *gis < *s-lis 'heavy'
- *s-gwaŋ 'hole'
- *b-rah 'hot'
- *wyi 'leak'
- *bom 'light'
- *s-lo; *b-re 'long'
- *dzöhl 'loose'
- *mah 'lost'
- *s-dem ~ *them 'low'
- *khət 'matched'
- *sahr 'new'
- *gyahm 'red'
- *mihn 'ripe'
- *tsik 'rotten'
- *lum 'round'

- *p-tsha 'sharp'
- *tun 'short'
- *zim 'small'
- *b-sir 'sour'
- *tuk 'spicy'
- *sli-s 'stale'
- *b-rehk 'sweet'
- *ruhŋ 'thick'
- *plek 'thin'
  - *wa 'to be thin (esp. of boards)'
- *mun 'warm'
- *pal 'white'
  - *plaŋ 'bright, illuminated'

N. Action verbs with human agent

- *s-po 'beat'
- *ŋih 'beg'
- *kəi 'bite'
- *s-mut 'blow'
  - *phut 'to blow with bellows'
- *r-lap 'bore'
- *s-kle(t) 'break'
- *hip 'burn'
- *r-duhp 'butt'
- *ləhŋ 'buy'
  - *b-lot 'to lend to someone'
  - *b-los 'to borrow'
- *guhr 'carry'
- *kloh 'catch'
- *kwa-t 'clothe'
- *r-sat 'comb'
- *phin 'cook'
  - *mihn 'to cook until done'
  - *tso 'to boil'
- *kəp 'cover'
- *pəl 'cut'
  - *kri 'to cut meat'
- *p-syah 'dance'
- *goh 'dig'
- *gəp 'draw water'

- *zya 'eat'
  - *kəi 'to eat things which require chewing'
- *hat 'extract'
- *z-dət 'find'
- *z-dup 'gather'
- *ya 'give'
- *p-set 'grind'
- *r-guh 'guard'
- *tup 'hammer'
- *tsho 'herd'
- *phok 'husk'
- *lut 'insert'
- *tak 'install'
- *r-then 'kick'
- *saht 'kill'
- *kek 'ladle'
- *b-rihm 'lay wall'
- *lep 'lick'
- *dzət 'make'
- *pek 'milk'
- *z-bra-t 'mix'
- *pho-t 'open'
- *phok 'pay'
- *tik 'pick up'
- *s-krəp 'pin closed'
- *p-tsil 'pinch'
- *p-sut 'plug'
- *tek 'press'
- *dzəhk 'put'
  - *nat 'to set down, place'
- *ra-s 'release'
- *phit 'remove from fire'
- *tsep 'ride'
- *s-ŋo 'roast'
- *b-zu 'rub'
  - *p-sil 'to scrub'
- *s-lom 'scald'
- *sim 'scoop'
- *s-pik 'scrape'
  - *pur 'to scratch'
- *s-nan 'seize'
- *p-yet 'sell'
- *s-priŋ 'send'
- *ruhp 'sew'

- *p-yen 'shave'
- *gap 'shoot'
- *s-tən 'show'
- *kok 'skin, peel'
- *phyak 'snap'
- *tshim 'soak'
- *was 'sow seed'
- *khəl 'spin wool'
- *p-si 'split firewood'
- *tser 'squeeze'
- *ku 'steal'
  - *rok 'to ransack, rummage'
- *r-wal 'stir'
- *on 'stop'
- *sit 'sweep'
- *p-sik ~ *p-sis 'teach'
- *p-tsit 'tear'
- *khya 'throw'
- *s-ki 'tie'
- *s-to 'trade'
- *kil 'twist'
- *s-krup 'unfold'
- *bohk 'uproot'
- *tse 'wash'
  - *r-za 'to wash hair'
- *rəhk 'weave'
  - *rihn 'to set up a loom'
- *hul 'whet'

Further reading

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